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Cedars, February 2010

Cedarville University

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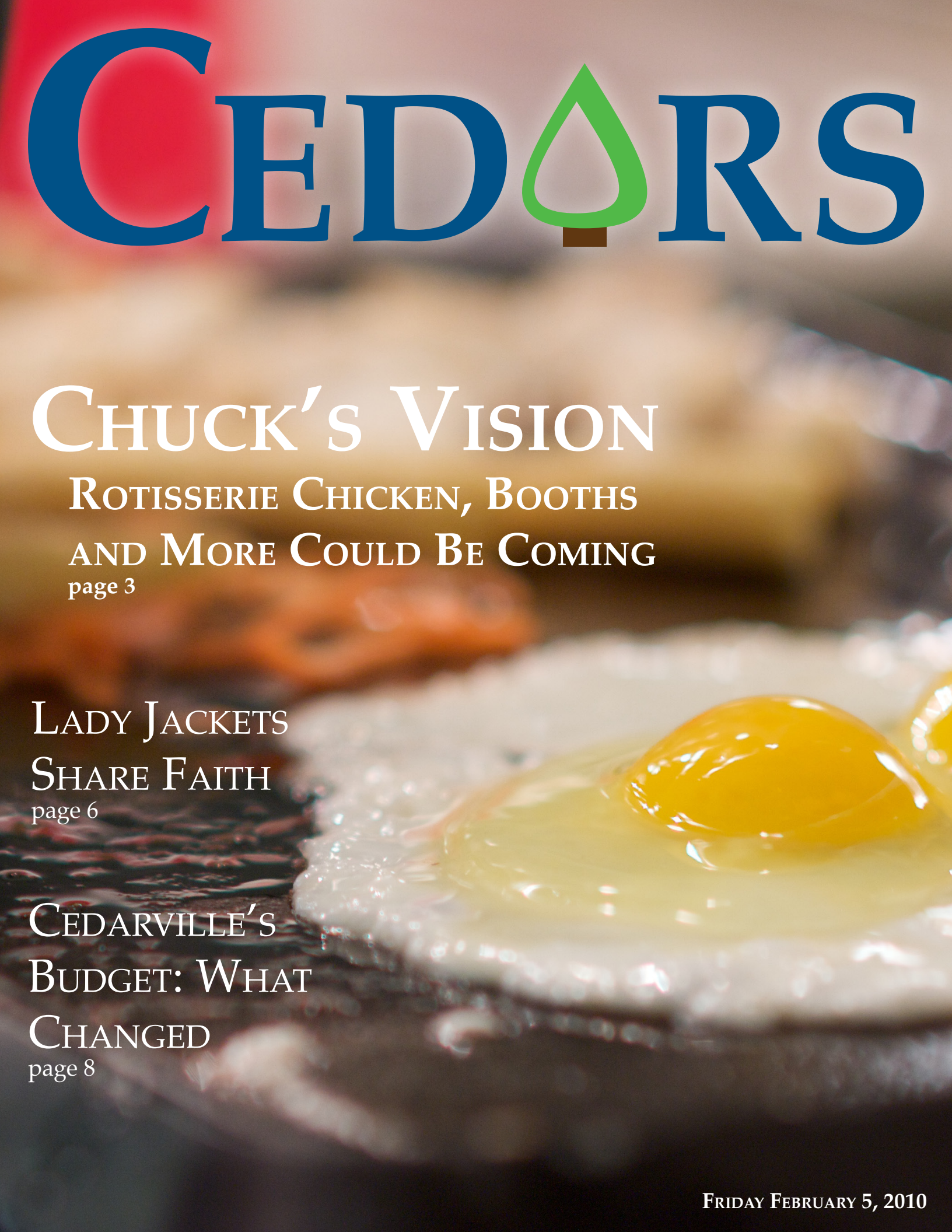
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CEDARS



CHUCK'S VISION

ROTISSERIE CHICKEN, BOOTHS
AND MORE COULD BE COMING
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LADY JACKETS

SHARE FAITH

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CEDARVILLE'S
BUDGET: WHAT
CHANGED

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Students turned out in droves Tuesday, Jan. 26, for the men's and women's basketball games vs. Walsh. Neither team disappointed the fans. The third-ranked women added to their winning streak, and the men upset second-ranked Walsh. *Photo by: Jonathan Moultroup*

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CEDARS

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WELCOME TO THE NEW CEDARS

I'm the managing editor this year, and I'm really excited for the future of the student newspaper. This is our first issue since last spring, and we are so glad to be back.

The staff has been working really hard to get the paper started again, and we hope you like the changes we've made. You've probably noticed that Cedars looks a bit different than before. We've reformatted the newspaper into a news magazine that will include more enterprise stories and feature pieces than before.

We're also launching a new Web site called ReadCedars.com that will keep you up to date on the news happening at Cedarville. The Web site will provide timely coverage of events between print issues.

If you have questions, please direct them to me or to Jeff Gilbert, our faculty adviser.

Emily Severance
managing editor

CHUCK WANTS CHANGES, BUT SAYS HE MAY HAVE TO WAIT

by Bekah Cvetich



The yogurt bar is a new addition to Chucks this semester. The recent changes in the cafeteria are just a hint of the ones to come. *Photo by Andrew Bash*

After students spotted Chuck McKinney with blueprints in hand taking measurements of Chuck's, the rumor of a renovation spread. If it is up to him, by the fall of 2010 Cedarville could be observing some major changes where the campus gathers for meals.

"We've been in this building since 2000 — it's time to change some things," Chuck said.

He said he has been working on drawing up plans with a contractor, but no final decisions have been made.

With the budget cuts just announced, Chuck said that suggesting renovation right now isn't the "optimum time." But he said that it's best to present the idea as soon as possible so it's not a new concept when the right time comes.

Chuck said plans have already been made to change the paint and carpet, so it would be easiest to do all the renovations during that time.

"Might as well do it all at once," he said.

The first change Chuck would like to see is an opening of the mezzanine, known affectionately to students as "Up Chuck's."

"I want it to be more inviting to students,"

he said.

He wants to install booths and large conference tables for classes that want to meet there.

Chuck wants to build a "bigger, better stairway" to the mezzanine that is wider so people aren't bumping into each other on their way up and down. He said he originally wanted to relocate the staircase but that it would be too expensive.

Chuck said he would like the serving lines to serve students "more efficiently and elegantly." He wants to demolish all of the lines and restructure them to be more visually appealing. The revised serving lines would also reduce crowding.

The new serving lines would include hot wells and cold wells to serve hot and cold foods together, Chuck explained, as well as incorporate lines with differing elevations.

Chuck said he's been serving some type of chicken every night this semester to cater to the chicken-craving student body.

"Everyone cries for chicken," Chuck said.

In the renovation, he wants to put in a rotisserie chicken line that would be open every meal. The station would also serve

meats like pork roast and prime rib.

The deli bar and veggie line would get a makeover too. Chuck would like to transform those stations into a sub sandwich station with fresh baked bread.

"The smell of fresh bread mesmerizes people," he said with a laugh. "We'll all gain 50 pounds."

One issue with the demolition and renovation process, Chuck said, is that Chuck's is busy in the summer — the only good time for renovation.

"Cedarville's a great place, so everyone wants to come see it," he said, referring to the numerous camps and youth groups that visit during the summer.

If the renovation takes place, the Pioneer College Catering Company will fund it, Chuck said. It is good public relations to keep the cafeteria looking new and nice, he said.

No plans are completed yet, but Chuck said the contractor will have a solid plan early this month. He explained that the university makes the final decision, but the company will make its recommendations. The final verdict on a renovation will be determined by the end of February.

STUDENT LEADERS GET HANDS-ON TRAINING

by Emily Severance

A new student leadership program called Focus Leadership has been implemented at Cedarville University this year. Bob Lutz, associate dean for Student Leadership Development, was put in charge of developing this new program, with hopes that Focus will provide a more hands-on approach to leadership training than the previous program.

Focus Leadership has replaced the Leadership Institute as the primary campus leadership training. The new program was designed to be a more holistic approach to leadership, providing students with opportunities to explore the leadership skills they have learned in practical ways.

"Focus is simple and practical in that there are clear levels that you go through," Lutz said. "There is an application component, from being in a Christian ministry or an MIS team, to exploring leadership through Getting Started or High School Leadership Conference."

The program's components are View and Develop. The View component is comprised of six different workshops that introduce students to campus leadership. The sessions include training on issues like delegation, leading meetings, having hard conversations and understanding diversity in leadership.

Carmille Akande, dean of Multicultural and Special Programs, leads the Diversity in Leadership sessions, which prepare students for a society that is becoming more and more global.

"I hope students will gain an awareness of diversity related issues through these sessions," Akande said. "We want them to appreciate the importance of diversity, not only as a leader here at Cedarville, but also when they graduate and go into the work force."

Some of the other faculty and staff leading sessions include Tom Hutchison, Jeff Reep, Milton Becknell, Carl Ruby, Drew Flamm and Brian Burns.

The Develop component was designed for stu-



Cedarville students are learning about leadership through a hands-on approach.
Photo by Jonathan Moultroup

dents who have completed the View program and are looking to expand their leadership skills in specific ways.

"We want it to be a resource," Lutz said. "Sometimes students find themselves in a position that is a lot bigger than they anticipated. They have no idea how to delegate to others, or lead meetings, and they don't know where to go with that fear and frustration.

"If they know Focus is here," he continued,

"and they've used it before to get their feet wet, then hopefully when they find themselves in those bigger positions of leadership, they will be able to use it again."

While the View component of Focus Leadership is now a required element for becoming a campus leader, Lutz was clear that the sessions were designed to be more than "just another class."

"I've worked with our presenters and told

them I don't want them lecturing for 45 minutes," Lutz said. "What I really want is about a 20-minute lecture, then Q&A and breakout sessions that let people discuss and work through what we're talking about."

Students who have already been through the sessions have responded positively about their experience.

"The sessions were actually really helpful and interesting," said Rachel Bowers, a senior RA in Maddox. "I would recommend them for anyone, even if they aren't required to go."

The program is still being developed and modified. As Lutz and others get feedback from students, sessions are altered or removed in order to reduce redundancies in the program and improve the experience for everyone involved.

"We're continuing to try and improve," Lutz said. "But any time you change something on a college campus, particularly on a program level, it takes two or three years before it's really understood and we know what's working and what's not. It's somewhat of a daunting task."

"We want it to be a resource. Sometimes students find themselves in a position that is a lot bigger than they anticipated. They don't know where to go with that fear and frustration."

Bob Lutz

dean of student leadership development

Lutz spent a lot of time looking at what other universities were doing in terms of leadership training to provide the best experience for Cedarville students.

"It's a continual learning process," he said. "I would also say that you try something and say 'we need to tweak this,' or 'we need to change this.' We've already changed one of the core sessions just because we don't want there to be any redundancies. I don't want a student to come into an hour session or workshop and it feel as if it was a waste of time or there wasn't something new that they learned from it."

Lutz has a degree in Higher Education and Student Development from Ohio State University and has a passion for helping students at each level of their college experience.

"We want to make sure that from the time that students come on campus as freshmen, to the time they leave as seniors, that they have been given opportunities and tools that have helped them develop as a leader on our campus, and we hope that that transfers to when they leave as well."



Cedarville sophomore Jake Brown (right) was one of the student leaders for Getting Started Weekend this past fall. Beginning this fall, working on the Getting Started Weekend staff can be part of a student's training in the Focus Leadership program. Photo by Jonathan Moultroupp

LADY JACKETS DON'T MISS A CHANCE TO SHARE THEIR FAITH *by Andrew Smith*

If you visit Kirk Martin's office you will see a poster of his Cedarville University women's basketball team on the outside of his door. But it's not a picture of what you might think. It's not a picture of the team hoisting a conference championship trophy. It's not an official team photo. It's not even a picture from one of the international mission trips the team takes every other year.

It's of his players gathered with an opposing team in prayer. Opponents were at first reluctant to join the postgame prayer circle, Martin said, especially if the game hadn't gone well for them. But now when teams play Cedarville, they expect the tradition. Martin said that in 21 games, both home and away, there have been 21 postgame prayer circles.

The picture is an example of what Martin calls his team's Christian responsibility.

"We have more opportunities to share with unbelievers on this campus than [anyone]," Martin said. "We have team after team that come in, and they don't know Christ. They're on this campus, and it's our responsibility to make sure that we provide opportunities [to hear]."

Each of the 10 players is assigned a player on the opposing team and they prepare a goodie bag for that player. The bags contain candy and a short note. Each player will also tell the opposing player that she prayed for her before the game. The bags include a tract titled "Why Do You Play Basketball?" which challenges the reader to live for something more than a game.

While the Cedarville University wom-

en's basketball team might be ranked No. 3 in the NAIA, Martin appreciates much more about his players than just game performances. Many players have difficult majors such as nursing, education or social work, and busy class schedules usually force the team to practice short-handed

Martin said that since during recruiting

Especially for nursing and education majors, that is a difficult thing."

Martin said that individual motivation is what keeps his players so active. "God has given us really quality young ladies," he said.

But Martin is also proud of his team on the court. Following the Walsh game on January 26, which his team won 83-56, Martin said in a postgame interview that it may have been the best game any team of his had played at home.

When asked which of the nine games left most worry him, Martin replied, "Every game."

"It's college basketball," he said. "We learned two years ago down at Wilberforce that if you don't come ready to play, you get beat."

While the team certainly has national aspirations, Martin said that they're more focused on placing in the American Midwest Conference.

"The way that NAIA rankings work, if you're third in your conference, on that last ranking, you're probably going to be ranked below the other two in the national ranking at the end of the year," Martin said. "That's just the way it works, and I think that's fair."

So that means more performances like the Walsh game, and it's difficult for any team to maintain that high level of play. The key is not letting emotions get the best of you, Martin said. Championship teams are composed and consistent.

"Hopefully, when you watch us [during] pregame, we're never too high or too low," Martin said. "Hopefully, you see about the same thing every game."



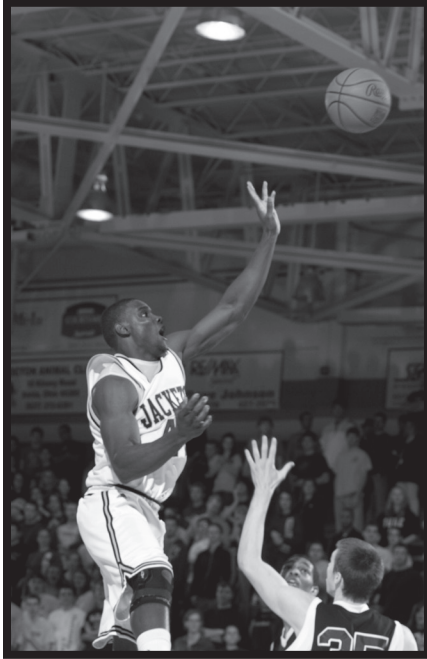
Alison Lemon and her teammates pray with opponents after every game
Photo by Jonathan Moultroup

he encourages them to "choose Cedarville for Cedarville" and not just for basketball, he needs to honor that by allowing them to be involved with as much as they can. He regrets that they can't be involved in more opportunities, such as AWANA or other church ministries.

"There's so much need in local churches for college students to come rescue them on Wednesday night or Sunday School," he said. "But [the team's] regularly scheduled games and practices run through two semesters. You can't manipulate your schedule to overload on one semester.

Q & A: RICARDO ALLIMAN AND CHRIS BEALS

by Michael Clouse

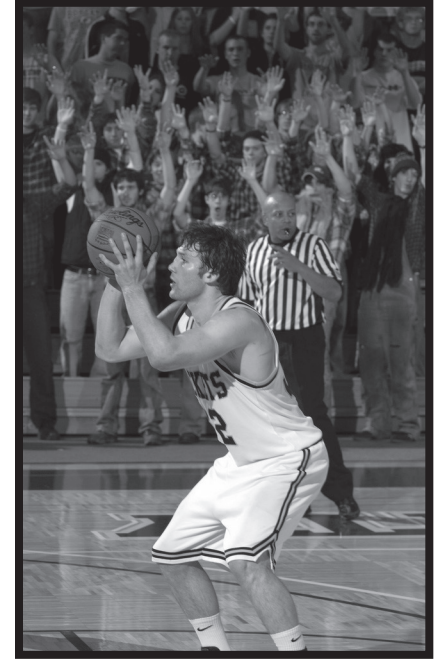


Photos by Jonathan Moultroup

As basketball season continues into February, two players on the men's team are playing in the final few games of their college careers at Cedarville University. Both are members of the 1,000-point club and are averaging over 15 points per game this season. They come from different backgrounds, but the Lord led them to Cedarville where they have become teammates and friends.

Ricardo Alliman grew up in Kingston, Jamaica. He played basketball in high school, but didn't know about Cedarville until Cedarville graduate Michael Minto introduced Alliman to former coach Ray Slaughter. Chris Beals grew up only an hour from Cedarville and attended Worthington Christian in the Columbus area.

They have grown in numerous ways since arriving at Cedarville and have many memories of their times spent as a Yellow Jacket.



CHRIS BEALS

What is your favorite movie?

"Good Will Hunting." The scene by the Lake when Robin Williams talks with Matt Damon has done more for me spiritually than most sermons have.

What is the most memorable moment of your Cedarville basketball career?

I have to say the Walsh game this year at home. The crowd was by far the loudest it's ever been during my four years here. It was so easy just getting lost in the game during the second half and watching our team come together. And I love beating Walsh.

What is the best class you've taken at Cedarville?

The best class that I have taken at CU was Personal Evangelism with Dr. Blumenstock. That class shattered my arrogant paradigm of the Christian life and gave me fresh pair of lens to see Christ differently.

What is your favorite Chuck's food or meal?

Pita Pizza. Hands down.

Who is your favorite professional athlete?

Steve Nash who is the point guard for the [Phoenix] Suns.

What is your favorite off-campus activity?

I really enjoy just getting coffee with people and talking. Sounds girlish but with how busy college life is it's hard to just sit and connect with people. Taco Bell runs are up there as well. Gotta hit up that late night CGC (Cheesy Gordita Crunch).

What is your most embarrassing moment?

While accepting the Most Athletic Award in high school I tripped going up the stairs on the platform in front of the whole school. Irony at its finest.

RICARDO ALLIMAN

What is your favorite movie?

I have a lot of favorites but if I had to choose, I would choose "Hitch."

What is the most memorable moment of your Cedarville basketball career?

When we beat Walsh by one point. It was the loudest I ever heard it in our gym.

What is the best class you've taken at Cedarville?

My best class would be International Business, because I'm fascinated with the global nature of business today.

What is your favorite Chuck's food or meal?

Mashed potatoes and gravy with chicken.

Who is your favorite professional athlete?

Lebron James because he's an unbelievable athlete with great work ethic.

What is your favorite off-campus activity?

Going to the movies is my favorite off-campus activity.

What is your most embarrassing moment?

My most embarrassing moment would be when I slipped and fell on ice on my way to class one morning.

CEDARVILLE TRIMS STAFF, FOCUSES ON AFFORDABILITY

By Miyah Byrd



Photo by Gerhard Mullican

The 2010-2011 school year will see small but significant changes in Cedarville University's budget. Cedarville has begun the process of implementing a five-year strategy to increase enrollment and launch new academic programs at undergraduate and graduate levels, including a School of Pharmacy and Master of Science in Nursing. Both of these academic programs are currently pending accreditation.

Cedarville has a reputation for its priority of affordability, according to Christianity Today. The first step in Cedarville's five-year strategy demonstrates the university's commitment to this goal. The Board of Trustees approved its first staff reduction for the university, and 19 staff members were released. These workers will continue to receive salary and benefits through June 30 as part of their severance package. They are also being offered assistance in career planning and preferential hiring for future university positions.

The Board of Trustees approved a limited tuition increase for the next school year, and the university will cover the required operational increases through reallocation of financial resources.

Cedarville's total budget for the school year 2010-2011 will increase by 6.5 percent (\$461,000). This includes reallocations of \$2.2 million and a work-force reduction of 30 full-time positions, including several that had been unfilled. Faculty positions were not a part of these employment reductions.

The university does ask for prayer over

the decisions and for the faculty and staff during this difficult time. "These budget decisions are pro-active steps, not emergency measures," said Rod Johnson, vice president for operations.

Cedarville conducted a comprehensive staffing study during the past six months, which compared their staffing levels with four private university cohort groups. The study's conclusions provided a standard for the staffing level suitable to serve a growing student body while keeping employment costs at a competitive level.

This newly approved budget does mean a few changes for incoming and returning university students. Freshman and sophomore students typically have 16 credit hours each semester, while the average juniors and seniors usually take fewer than 16 credit hours. While there has been a steady decrease over the past five years in the number of average credits for juniors and seniors, the tuition increase should only affect a few Cedarville students.

In addition to the pending tuition increase, there have also been reports of increased financial aid for Cedarville students. Roscoe Smith, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, said, "University scholarships will continue to be funded." Other scholarships and grants may increase, which leads to an increase in students' aid packages. For instance, the Pell Grant may increase by \$200 in the 2010-2011 academic year.

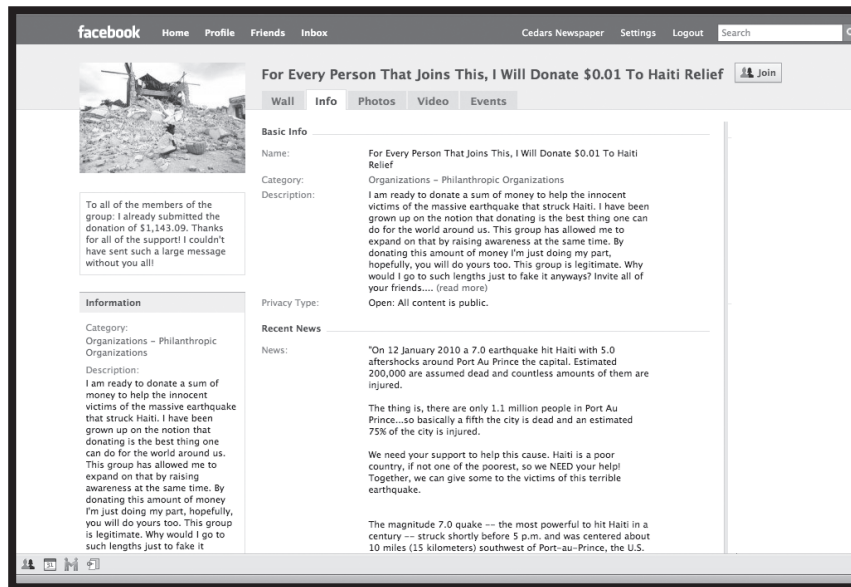
Another byproduct of Cedarville's new budget is an increase in opportunities for students who work at the university. The staff reductions may lead to positions for new and returning students to work around the university.

"Higher education can no longer place the entire burden of growing institutional costs on the backs of students and families," Cedarville University President Bill Brown said. "If universities are to deliver on our mission of providing each generation with the skills they need to be lifelong leaders, we must be strategic in our decision-making as well as careful stewards of our resources."

The administration says the new budget has been tailored to meet the growing needs of the Cedarville family. While it has included tough decisions, the university says the new budget will enhance enrollment and launch new academic programs.

**"... we must be
strategic in our
decision-making
as well as careful
stewards of our
resources."**

*President
Dr. Bill Brown*



ANALYSIS: 1,000 STRONG FOR SLACKTIVISM

Does it matter that support of causes in name only is a growing trend?

by Danielle Early

The generation that made it fashionable to go green, be politically aware and fight injustice through consumerism has taken up the banner of social philanthropy.

If anyone can afford philanthropy, it is us. College students have reached a spending high with 13.8 million students carrying the purchasing power of \$53.9 billion after taxes and necessities have been paid, according to an SMU Daily Campus article published in 2003. And now some of us have come together, in all of our compassionate glory, to post the color of our bras on Facebook.

Which brings us to the question: Why on earth did someone think it was a good idea to start a chain e-mail convincing us to post the color of underwear to promote Breast Cancer Aid?

The answer to the what-bra-color question is slacktivism. A linguistic hybrid of the words slack and activism, the term describes the trend of eager involvement in philanthropies and ministries that has earned itself a place in our culture on Internet soapboxes such as Facebook and Twitter.

It is the shallow urge to buy and wear the T-shirt that boldly declares "Feed

the Hungry!" or "Love the World!" without bothering to donate food or minister to those hurting in other parts of the world. It is manifested in the joining of Facebook groups to raise support against any sort of evil from "Rosie O'Donnell is the Ugliest Man Alive" to "1,000,000 Strong Against Democratic Presidents." Even the recent earthquake crisis has brought out slacktivist support from celebrities such as actress Jessica Alba, who offered this on Twitter: "My 1000th tweet is for the people of Haiti."

Along with slacktivism comes the illusion of accomplishment when nothing substantial has actually been done. Dr. Timothy Gombis, assistant professor of Bible at Cedarville University, has observed the ramifications of this trend.

"It can have that effect where we feel as

if we have done our job if we've just expressed our concern," Gombis said.

The question is: Why do we do this? It may come from a variety of sources: the massive overload of information to increase awareness for social causes (which can have a desensitizing effect), the desire to be affiliated with a movement and cause greater than ourselves (at least for appearance's sake) and the shift in our generation's concept of community from local to global.

"It's certainly not an effective thing," Gombis said. "Because all [it amounts to] is the collective wish that a certain thing not be the case like 'we wish there was not poverty in Haiti' or 'we wish there were not children going without food.' But that doesn't [necessarily] facilitate any kind of action."



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BOOK REVIEW: 'THE UNNAMED'

BY JOSHUA FERRIS *by Danielle Early*

A novel of modest undertakings, "The Unnamed" by Joshua Ferris has come under attack by readers and critics alike. Jennie Yabroff of Newsweek claims the new literary piece can at most be interpreted as "a commentary on the futility of the search for meaning," and even went so far as to title her own review "No Meaning No Meaning." Jay McInerney of the New York Times laments that the reader is left to stumble around blindly for 300 pages among metaphors and sexual misconducts without hope of deriving meaning. Why is it that literary critics, awed by Ferris' first novel, "Then We Came to the End," have turned their backs on the young author some regard as the next great American writer?

Rather than writing a story with wars, economic depression, or terrorists, Ferris has taken the most ordinary aspects of our lives to illustrate how close we are to finding or losing that which makes us human. The novel chronicles the life of Tim Farnsworth, who is a happy and successful man with a lovely wife, home and daughter. All is perfect until Farnsworth begins suffering from a medical phenomenon, undiagnosed by any professional in the world and incomprehensible to those who love him, which compels him to walk without ceasing until he collapses from exhaustion.

writer in terms of expressing what beats in the human heart but is less natural in conveying the beauty that frames those moments in time. The fast-paced writing and plot development are gripping, reminding the reader of a John Grisham novel while simultaneously embodying a delicate and tragic voice reminiscent of Eli Wiesel.

More importantly, "The Unnamed" forces us to ask questions we never thought people had to ask. Where do we turn when we have sought an explanation for suffering from our families, doctors and even God, but still find ourselves wasting away when only silence answers? Ferris has artistically distorted our ordinary and calloused perception of reality.

Readers and critics, who expressed disappointment in the unrealistic narrative that centered on a man who could not control his own choice to walk, have dismissed such characterization as absent of meaning. Significance cannot be found in the fictional nature of the medical condition but in what it represents. Perhaps it is symbolic of a condition we all suffer from, one that subtly defines all of our lives. Ferris' novel suggests that life is not about controlling our circumstances but learning to balance our obsession with it with our

The most apparent frustration for readers may be the lack of description about the novel's setting. Ferris is an excellent

hope for happiness. Farnsworth cannot stop walking just as we cannot stop living.

INTRODUCING THE CEDARS MEDIA RATING SCALE

- 5 TREES: Expertly crafted, both aesthetically and thematically. Otherwise known as art.
4 TREES: Worthwhile. Its positives outweigh its flaws. 3 TREES: Mediocre. Take it or leave it.
2 TREES: Its flaws outweigh its positives. Unworthy of your time and money.
1 TREE: There are better ways to spend your time. Having your teeth drilled, for one.

CEDARS RATING



CEDARS

FOR FANS OF:

DeLillo's postmodern style
meets
Nietzschean thought

MOVIE REVIEW:

'THE BOOK OF ELI' *by Andrew Smith*

In desolated America, ketchup packets are a rarity, a vial of shampoo is a luxury and the only water sources are controlled by a militant elite. The world is barren, ripped apart by war and the future is grim. Women are raped and killed on the street, and, every stranger is suspected of being a cannibal. As one of the few literate people alive, Carnegie (played by Gary Oldman) uses his knowledge to tyrannize those around him, but longs for one more book that he thinks will give him limitless power over a feeble world.

Eli (Denzel Washington) carries the world's last hope in "The Book of Eli," or if Carnegie has his way, perhaps its final measure of destruction. It's a book, the Book, and some say it was the reason the War was ever fought in the first place. Eli says he's on a divine mission to carry the world's last Bible westward, where it will be honored and safe. He meditates on it every day. On the road, Eli uses bow, knife, gun and Samurai moves to protect his most sacred possession. There is plenty of blood.

When Eli comes upon Carnegie's town, the shrewd despot discovers that the wanderer is not only an excellent fighter (Eli kills a dozen men while quoting Genesis 3 in Carnegie's bar) but also literate. Carnegie soon finds out about Eli's Bible through a slave girl named Solara (Mila Kunis). He plays nice at first, offering to take the book from Eli peacefully, but soon the shooting (and knifing, punching, stabbing and bombing) starts.

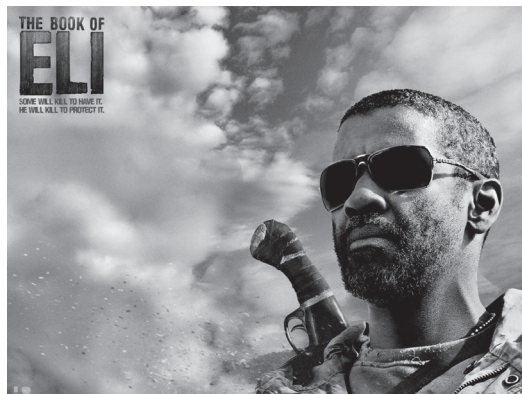
The movie is obviously Christian (often too obviously, actually) despite the heavy violence and frequent profanity. "I spent so long guarding and protecting the book, that I forgot the important part," Eli says toward the end of the movie. "Doing what it says."

As a character, Eli is a strange mix. Indeed, it's hard to imagine Jesus taking a bloody blade to the Pharisees. Eli is pious and kind, yet he has no second thoughts about lopping heads off when people threaten the Book. But deeper than his rugged exterior, Eli is a quiet, contemplative man who would prefer to sit and memorize Bible passages rather than slice up bad guys. His daily struggle to protect the Word despite the evil forces around him is a strong, though incomplete, illustration of redemption.

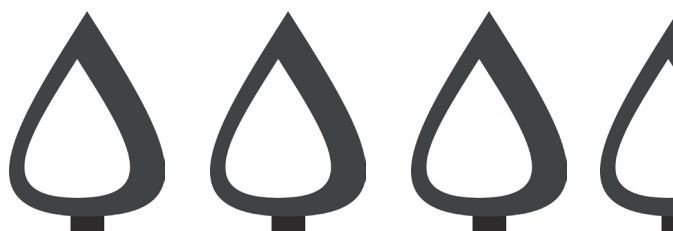
Thematically, "The Book of Eli" is more thoughtful than advertised. It offers plenty of both violence and religion, and the rugged, desolate setting creates an effective cross between classic American Western and bloody Old Testament epic. It has several weaknesses, however — particularly the confusing plot holes, predictable characterizations and eye-rolling heavy-handedness that typically weigh down similarly ambitious movies.

But despite the sloppy edges, a strong spiritual message still emerges, drawn straight from the pages of scripture. The film gives a believable depiction of human degradation and a transcendent testament to the power of the Word. Even Carnegie recognizes its authority, and his manipulation of the text serves as a fitting parallel to the atrocities of militant Christendom over the centuries. Like Satan, Carnegie wants to twist the words of God to feed his own ambition — a lust to be like the Father in knowledge and power. It's a mistake we've been making since Eden.

But Eli's faithfulness proves truer and more valuable than Carnegie's depravity. Like Christ, Eli suffers in the wilderness of loneliness and undoes the failures of those before him. He carries God's revelation to people who most desperately need it, bringing justice upon evildoers along the way.



CEDARS RATING



FOR FANS OF:

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PLAY REVIEW: THE BARD AND THE BOOGIE A PERFECT MATCH *by Lucas Zellers*



Benedick (Jordan Hickling) tells the audience of his views about love. *Photo by Jonathan Moultroup*

The Cedarville Theatre department brings a modern touch and a jazz flair to the Shakespearean classic “Much Ado About Nothing.” The production weds comedy and tragedy, war and peace, and even hate and love before the altar of swing.

As the play opens, Benedick, Claudio, Don Pedro and Don John return from war to the home of Leonato, and it isn’t long before Claudio falls deeply in love with Leonato’s daughter Hero. Meanwhile, the group is determined to see the free-wheeling Benedick married to Leonato’s often spiteful niece Beatrice. Their apparent mutual hatred is matched only by their vehemence never to marry.

Don Pedro’s half-brother Don John is determined to see Claudio and Hero split and schemes with his compatriots Borachio and Conrade to trick Claudio into thinking Hero is unfaithful. Don John is successful, and Claudio denounces Hero at what was supposed to be their wedding. Fortunately, Borachio is later overheard by the city watchman bragging of his deed, and Hero’s name is cleared. Claudio and Hero are mar-

ried, as are Beatrice and Benedick.

The play brings together some memorable performances. Jordan Hickling brings wry exuberance to the role of Benedick. The sullen and sadistic villain Don John is made very nasty indeed by Josiah Smith. Callan Yeates, as the outrageous constable Dogberry, commands the stage with his frenzied, manic gusto. And Jovane Caamaño easily manages the difficult task

of portraying Claudio’s ardent love with natural believability.

The set, designed by Robert Clements, is elegantly sparse. It proves amorphous and strikingly versatile. However, as the scenes change with startling alacrity, they seem the richer for being half imagined. The stage itself comes so close to the feet of the audience that the show spills over it, with the players entering and exiting through the audience, even delivering sections of dialogue within the aisles.

The decision to set the play in 1940s South Carolina was an easy one. The social hierarchy of the “old South” and the end of World War II hark back to the play’s original setting, yet remain relatable to the audience.

“I want people to have a great time with Shakespeare, and a modern setting makes it more accessible,” director Matt Moore said. “And I like the music.”

Indeed, music is the driving force of the production. It is Cedarville’s first play to be opened by a preshow, in homage to Shakespeare, which introduces the audience to Chet Jenkins and the Much Ado combo, who will accompany the play in jazz fashion throughout. The masquerade at Leonato’s home is transformed to a regular reveille by the jazz combo and show-stopping swing dancing by the cast. Even the set changes are performed not by black-clad stagehands under recorded music, but rather in full view of Jenkins swanky yet soulful sax.

The play retains the lyric beauty and riotous humor of the original, and adds to it the irresistible charm of a 1940s jukebox vibe. To borrow from Benedick, “Strike up, pipers!”



Swing dancers Lauren Macks and Jordan Doyle make of the stage a rug and cut it during the masquerade. *Photo by Jonathan Moultroup*